

Henley-in-Arden Baptist Church  
“Staying Connected” 13 – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020

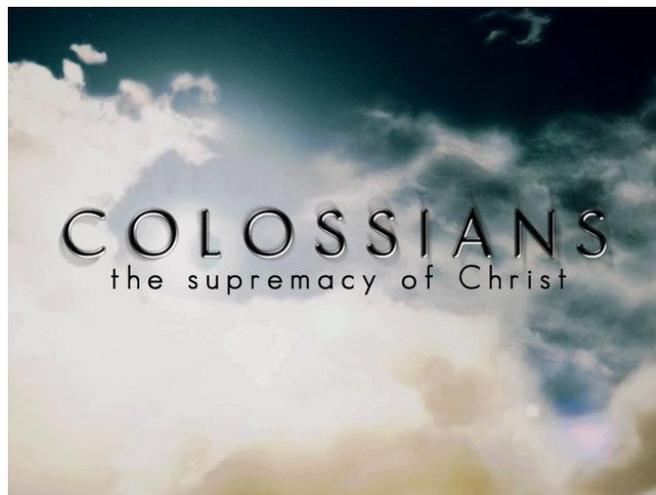
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*Staying connected to God and each other while not meeting as church in the normal way*

As things in this country open just a little, we continue to trust God for His help and protection – and for patience...

Reading the latest Baptist guidance, it is clear that, although other denominations may benefit from the opening of buildings for private prayer, we are not in a position to open yet; and certainly not for gathered worship. We long for the time when we can meet again.... but it seems that we are still some way off this. We will be discussing the practicalities as the guidance unfolds.

Today we begin a new series looking at extracts from the letter of Colossians



We start with chapter 1

v7....Christ in you, the hope of glory.

In Paul’s letter to the church at Colossae (part of modern-day Turkey) he leaves them in no doubt as to who Jesus is and how they should live as Christians

<sup>15</sup> The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

This beautiful passage speaks about the supremacy of Christ over the whole universe! Count the times it says ‘all / all things / everything’

Christ – who shows us perfectly what God is like – is involved in creation; and redemption: reconciliation and peace! These great truths are for the world to hear! During this time of global crisis as much as any time, we can have confidence in the Lordship of Christ – over all things.

The passage then moves on to the believer's place in all this. The passage speaks of 'you', which means 'us' too. We share in all this as well.

<sup>22</sup>...he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation – <sup>23</sup>if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

In practical terms what might that mean for us? We will look at this further over coming weeks; but one of the main 'takeaway' points today may be that we can be filled with **hope** and **confidence** – because of Christ! Our struggles, uncertainties and anxieties about the future, can be seen in this 'bigger picture' context: our future is secure – in a good way!

Lord God, our heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Son, reigning with You: Lord of all. In these difficult times, we pray for our world: for peace, reconciliation, hope... and a growing trust in You.

We pray for our government, and all those carrying significant responsibility for our lives. Help and strengthen them we pray, and may they lead with wisdom and integrity.

We pray against discrimination and injustice wherever it may be found. May Your kingdom values of justice and peace prevail; and we pray for Your church, that we would model good practices and be ruled by Your love.

Lord, forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

We pray for those who are unwell, the bereaved, and those experiencing significant difficulties at this time. Holy Spirit draw near; bring comfort and strength, we pray...

This week we pray for Your blessing on ice cream vendors, illustrators, IT consultants... joke shop keepers, janitors, journalists...

Lord, hear our prayers, in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen

This week's joke:

Q: Who was the greatest female financier in the Bible?

*Answer below*

For those not online, especially:

Worship services on TV this Sunday include:

- BBC1 10:45am Sunday Worship
- BBC1 1:15pm Songs of Praise

And finally, please do get in touch with me at any time

May God bless you with His peace.

Mike 01564 793975

*Answer to joke:*

Pharaoh's daughter. She went down to the bank of the Nile and drew out a little prophet (!)